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SUGGESTIONS FOR ELEMENTS OF A NEW PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE COMMITTEE ON SHIPPING IN THE FIELDS OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT, CONTAINERIZATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

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Abbreviations

EDI	electronic data interchange
EDIFACT	electronic data interchange for administration, commerce and transport
EDP	electronic data processing
GSP	generalized system of preferences
ICC	International Chamber of Commerce
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MTO	multimodal transport operator
TC 104	ISO technical committee no. 104
UCP	uniform customs and practices for documentary credits

Introduction

(i) This note has been prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat in response to paragraph 6 of resolution 67 (XIV) of the Committee on Shipping. It presents some suggestions for elements of a new programme of work based on the conclusions drawn from earlier reports submitted to the Committee on Shipping as well as from past work carried out by the UNCTAD secretariat in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development. Chapter I summarizes the findings of the studies requested by the Committee on Shipping for submission to the Group of Experts for inclusion in the formulation of the new programme of work. Chapter II presents a summary of the experience gained by the UNCTAD secretariat in its technical assistance activities. Chapter III introduces a proposal for a new programme of work in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. This note is intended to be read together with the report by the UNCTAD secretariat entitled *Inventory of existing mandates and new draft programme of work in the fields of multimodal transport and technological development* (TD/B/C.4/323), presented to the fourteenth session of the Committee on Shipping, in particular the summary and conclusions and chapter III of that report. Reference is also made to the report *Work programme on shipping* (TD/B/C.4/314), submitted to the thirteenth session of the Committee, which contains, in chapter VI, a list of issues requiring the attention of the Committee.[1]

2. In the past, the Committee's programme of work in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development concentrated on the consideration of studies prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat and by *ad hoc* groups of experts such as this one, or as a result of intergovernmental actions such as the United Nations Conference on the Multimodal Transport Convention, and on technical assistance activities carried out by the secretariat. This work has to a large extent left out a vital element, namely the actual "actors" - the private and public transport sectors.

3. In the past few years, the growing importance of multimodal transport has received increasing recognition. This can be seen, for example, in the draft legislation which is currently before the parliament in New Delhi (India). It has been prepared by the Wroking Group on Multimodal/Combined Transport of Goods, constituted by the Government of India to update the Indian Carriage of Goods by Sea Act. Similar efforts are underway in Latin America to introduce harmonized legislation on multimodal transport to cover most of the countries in South America. In both cases, it would appear that work carried out by the UNCTAD secretariat with a view to heightening awareness of multimodal transport in the countries concerned has contributed to these developments.

4. In many other countries similar, though less pronounced, moves may be noted. New studies carried out in response to Committee resolution 67 (XIV), however, show that despite the higher level of awareness concerning multimodal transport issues, concrete action to facilitate its introduction still lags behind. It would thus appear that there is a need to provide Governments and commercial parties in these countries with technical information on the implementation of multimodal transport. There is also a need to assist the transport industry in the countries in transition to adjust to modern multimodal transport and containerization. The studies also point out the impediments faced by developing countries with respect to the introduction of multimodal transport in the various areas covered.

5. Furthermore, work carried out by the UNCTAD secretariat indicates that concrete actions must be taken not only by the commercial parties involved in transport, but also by governmental institutions and by the secretariat itself if there is to be progress with the introduction of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development. A three-pronged new programme of work is consequently suggested. The first part would involve encouraging the commercial and governmental parties to take certain actions to introduce/facilitate multimodal transport operations. The second action would be the preparation of substantive research documentation by the UNCTAD secretariat, while the third would feature technical assistance activities.

6. As far as the third action is concerned, and taking into consideration the Committee's determination to "avoid widening the gap between the developed and the developing countries with regard to the implementation of multimodal transport and electronic data interchange... ,"[2] any new programme of work of the Committee on Shipping must contain, within its overall framework, three important technical assistance elements, (a) an awareness campaign of the issues under consideration, (b) the elaboration of a plan of action for the implementation of multimodal transport, and (c) a programme for assistance in initiating implementation. This last element is of particular relevance to countries in transition, in their process of adjusting to market economies.

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1 Paragraphs 78-84.

2 Resolution 67 (XIV), introductory paragraph 7.

Chapter I

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDIES PREPARED FOR THE GROUP OF EXPERTS

A. Container block trains

7. The secretariat's study entitled *Block train services in multimodal transport* (TD/B/C.4/AC.11/2) found that in order to provide efficient, fast and reliable services they were an important element in multimodal transport and when co-ordinated with ocean carriers' schedules, they could keep guarantee transit times attractive to shippers and thereby enhance the revenue-earning potential of a railway. However, the study also showed that many railways either do not operate such services or make few attempts to co-ordinate departures and arrivals with the schedules of ocean carriers.

8. The study further found that measures to upgrade technical conditions permitting scheduled, regular movement of container block trains must go hand in hand with appropriate organizational arrangements that take into account the relationship with customers and that certain agreements regulating mutual responsibilities between a railway and its customers may need to be concluded. The study identified various bottlenecks, particularly those at border crossings, and made recommendations for their elimination. Finally, it suggested that dissemination of the experience of those developing countries which have already reached an advanced stage of development of container block trains should play a major role in technical co-operation in this field.

9. The Group of Experts may wish to include in its proposals concerning the future programme of work of the Committee, an item on the development of container block train operations, particularly as concerns co-ordination with the schedules of ocean carriers, as an essential element of the introduction or improvement of the multimodal transport concept in transport systems. The Group of Experts may also wish to request the UNCTAD secretariat to develop this idea and present a detailed plan to the Committee on Shipping, for consideration at its fifteenth session.

B. Container standards

10. The UNCTAD secretariat's report entitled *Developments in the field of container standards* (TD/B/C.4/AC.11/6) shows that the use of larger-than-ISO-standard-containers may be economically justified and advantageous in some trades, but that any proliferation of the number of standard container sizes may be more damaging for the efficiency of transport operations than the use of those meeting current standards, even though these may not completely satisfy all users. The rejection, at the last session of the International Organization for Standardization's (ISO) Technical Committee No. 104 (TC 104), of its technical report "Future wide-body containers" featuring new empirical container dimensions, incompatible with the existing container systems and going beyond most existing infrastructure limits, has proved that the proposed dimensions of a new generation of containers were not acceptable to the transport industry. The proposed dimensions did not reconcile regional and worldwide requirements for container dimensions based either on more generous road-traffic regulations or on advantages provided by the efficient accommodation of locally used pallets. Unlike the case of the existing ISO container standards, the reports found that there are no prospects for the early universal acceptance of new container sizes.

11. Reflecting the spirit of ISO policy in the field of container standards - stability - the worlwide application of these standards should be maintained. This will enable container users and manufacturers throughout the world to continue to have confidence in the stability of those standards, an element which is essential for positive, economical, long-term development of the industry.

12. The report concluded that, at present, it was not possible to reconcile regional standards based on specific requirements with the present ISO standards for containers. Consequently, the worldwide

container system should continue to be founded on the present ISO container dimensions. However, the report stressed that there was nothing to prevent regional or specific trade developments based on local economic considerations to consider the use of other (non-ISO) container dimensions.

13. The UNCTAD secretariat will continue its support to developing countries in this area and make recommendations to the Committee on Shipping. In this regard, the Group of Experts may wish to highlight the need to keep this activity in the programme of work.

C. Electronic Data Interchange

14. The rapid spread of electronic data processing (EDP) within the transport industry and the subsequent development of electronic data interchange (EDI) had prompted the Committee on Shipping to request the UNCTAD secretariat to take stock of the main problems experienced by users and providers of multimodal transport services. The UNCTAD report, entitled *The effects of EDP and EDI on transport organizations and users* (TD/B/C.4/AC.11/5), pointed out that there were considerable difficulties for the smaller transport companies which did not have the financial capability - or perhaps the need - to invest in EDI equipment, in competing on an equal footing with their larger competitors. The report noted that competition between transport providers was now not so much between those from developed countries *versus* those from developing countries, but rather between those who offer full EDI services *versus* those who do not. Unfortunately, the latter very often do come from developing countries.

15. The report also drew attention to the risk that the global system, known as EDIFACT, for Electronic Data Interchange For Administration Commerce and Trade, which has been developed under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe's Working Party No. 4, may create trade barriers for those organizations unable to use EDIFACT messages. The report concluded that, at the very least, it will be necessary for transport providers and traders in developing countries to obtain the requisite information concerning EDI in order to be prepared for future connection to the global EDI network.

16. The Group of Experts may wish to consider including in the draft programme of work an item on the development of EDP/EDI and its influence on countries where transport users and providers have not yet modified their systems to accept EDI messages.

D. Impact of economic reforms

17. When the Committee met at its fourteen session, the process of transition to a market economy in the former planned-economy countries was in its infancy, and there were many uncertainties concerning the ways in which rigidly controlled, centrally planned economies could best be transformed into customer-oriented, flexible trading systems. The study entitled *Problems and requirements that arise from the broad economic reforms and restructuring of selected countries* (TD/B/C.4/AC.11/3), requested by the Committee, was thus particularly timely. It has allowed the secretariat to gain a valuable understanding of the problems and of the requirements of the transport industry within these countries.

18. The study found that without efficiently functioning transport systems, the prospects for further economic development would be very limited. Although some of the countries have at their disposal basic transport systems which satisfied reasonably well the requirements of their economies, the poor technical condition and technological backwardness of transport equipment form an obstacle to further economic development and growth of trade. The study concluded that this field required revitalization, new construction and the introduction of modern equipment and operating methods.

19. The study further suggested that emphasis should be placed on making better use of the existing infrastructure and on the rendering of assistance in the creation of a competitive transport sector. Reorientation towards a market economy would mean the adoption of corresponding legislation permitting freedom for economic activities, equal economic conditions for different forms of property, and

the possibility of privatization of State enterprises. The study also suggested that the transition from state-controlled enterprises to joint-stock, privately owned companies was likely to be gradual, but stressed that it must be stimulated. Road transport and freight-forwarding sectors were seen as likely to be the first to benefit from assistance. It finally highlighted the fact that lack of experience and shortage of trained, experienced managerial staff for dealing with various aspects of multimodal transport operations may be one of the main handicaps, which may be overcome through international assistance.

20. The Group of Experts may wish to suggest to the Committee on Shipping that this subject be kept under review through regular reporting by the UNCTAD secretariat.

Chapter II

SUMMARY OF THE EXPERIENCE GAINED FROM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

21. At the fourteenth session of the Committee on Shipping, it was pointed out by several spokesmen that technical assistance activities form an important part of the promotion of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development in member countries. This has also been confirmed by the secretariat's work in the field. Government bodies as well as transport providers and users become keenly interested in these issues once they realize the importance of the subjects for the development of their national economies, in general, and for export promotion and growth of national transport capabilities in particular. But the key words in this context are "once they realize", because at first there is very often a lack of understanding of their importance. In other words, based on factual experience, it has been found that there is an urgent need for greater awareness concerning these subjects on the part of senior officials from both the public and private sectors.

22. An awareness campaign should be mounted, aimed at top representatives from governmental and private transport-related organizations. This would include Customs authorities, transport providers and their users. The goal would be to explain how countries and individual organizations, could benefit from appropriate use of multimodal transport and EDI. Suggestions would be made as to how individual organizations might implement the necessary changes to obtain those benefits.

23. Once awareness has been created, the countries would then require assistance with the implementation of measures assisting the introduction or improvement of multimodal transport operations. These measures must be aimed at both governmental and commercial parties. Indeed, one of the most important aspects of this work is to ensure that the two sectors establish direct lines of communications and that due note is taken by Governments of the practical needs of the transport industry.

24. The UNCTAD secretariat's experience gained from technical assistance work has shown that developing countries require guidance with the implementation of the operational, institutional and legal changes required in the development of multimodal transport. This would apply, for example, to container block train services or the introduction of EDI capabilities. The secretariat also has experience with the introduction of multimodal transport and containerization in a large country in the process of changing from a planned economy to a more decentralized one. The Committee on Shipping may wish to take into account the need for technical assistance in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development in its future programme of work. To this end, the Group of Experts may wish to request the UNCTAD secretariat to develop this idea further and present a detailed plan to the Committee on Shipping for consideration at its fifteenth session for subsequent incorporation into a new programme of work.

25. In 1991 a total of four multimodal transport workshops were delivered to senior transport executives from countries in the process of changing from a centrally planned economy to a more decentralized system. The conclusions reached at those workshops match closely the findings of the study cited in chapter I above. They emphasized the need for assistance to Governments and private or soon-to-be-privatized transport organizations involved in multimodal transport and containerization in these countries. In addition, a further 11 workshops were conducted throughout the world in 1991. As of November 1991, a total of 414 persons had participated in such workshop deliveries. The total for 1991 is expected to reach about 440 persons or 60 per cent more than in 1990.

26. The Group of Experts may wish to make recommendations to the Committee on Shipping to strengthen the UNCTAD secretariat training activities in these fields while bearing in mind the continuing need for rendering similar assistance to countries in transition to a market economy. Indeed, the possibility of co-ordinating activities in both developing countries and in countries in transition may lead to benefits in terms of economies of scale. The Group of Experts may also wish to recommend that donor countries consider positively the possibility of funding such training activities so as to assist these countries with the earliest and most effective introduction of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development of their transport services.

Chapter III

PROPOSED NEW PROGRAMME OF WORK IN THE FIELDS OF MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

27. This chapter presents elements of a tentative programme of work for the Committee on Shipping to support the development of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development. In the past the Committee had primarily concentrated its programme of work on studies carried out by the UNCTAD secretariat, or by *ad hoc* groups of experts, or through intergovernmental action such as the United Nations Conference on a Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods. While, according to comments made at the fourteenth session, the Committee had found these studies useful, it would appear that its programme of work should include new elements more attuned to the requirements of the 1990s.

28. Document TD/B/C.4/323 listed, in paragraph 71, only two outstanding requests, namely a report on container ship leasing (erroneously shown as container ship "financing") and the drafting of a MT document based on the Hague-Visby Rules. The first of these tasks was completed with the report *Container ship leasing* (TD/B/C.4/339). The latter is underway now that the UNCTAD/ICC Rules for Multimodal Transport Documents have been completed, and should be before the Committee at its fifteenth session.

29. Subjects warranting the attention of the Committee in the future were identified in paragraphs 81 to 98 of document TD/B/C.4/323. In addition, the Committee had requested that the UNCTAD secretariat study two new subjects, container block train services and the impact of the economic reforms in former planned-economy countries. Both of these issues have been covered in chapter I above.

30. In order to enhance the efforts of the Committee, the new programme of work could involve a broader spectrum of the transport industry, in particular the private sector which largely remains in the dark concerning the work of the Committee. In drafting this tentative work plan, while retaining the recurrent or continuing tasks (listed in paragraph 74 of document TD/B/C.4/323) care has been taken to suggest actions, which may be carried out by the commercial parties themselves, by Governments, by intergovernmental organizations and by the UNCTAD secretariat.

31. In view of the Committee's mandate and its instructions to the secretariat, some actions will have to continue to be of a purely analytical nature and take the form of reports presented to the Committee for its consideration. However, this approach involves only peripherally the private or public transport sectors. It is therefore suggested that any new programme of work must contain elements which address directly the needs of those two sectors, so that better interaction can be initiated between the Committee and its secretariat, on the one side, and the private and public transport sectors, on the other.

32. Such a change of focus will place considerable emphasis on these two components which in the past, outside the actual meetings of the Committee, have only sporadically participated in the promotion of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development. It is possible that the desired results mat not be realized if the private and public transport sectors of member countries do not co-operate actively in the future programme of work. Nevertheless, the UNCTAD secretariat believes that it is necessary to move towards a course of action that will stimulate progress in these important fields.

33. The Committee itself recognizee, at its fourteenth session, that it lacked the requisite technical know-how to deal with certain issues. For this reason it decided to ask the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to convene the present Group of Experts to draw up a new programme of work for the Committee's consideration. Since it is possible that the Committee may also in the future lack certain technical know-how, it is difficult to envisage how it will be able to deal in depth with the issues under consideration. A new programme of work that involves the private and public transport sectors more would thus seem to have to rely on the continuing assistance of experts such as those selected for the meeting for which this document has been prepared.

34. With this consideration in mind, and realizing that a fair amount of good-will and co-operation will be required of persons and organizations not hitherto actively involved in the work of the Committee, elements of a new programme of work have been proposed as follows: (a) involvement of the

private and public transport sectors in the promotion of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development; (b) substantive subject-matter research; and (c) increased technical assistance activities, all three equally important.

A. Involvement of both the private and public parties

1. Private organizations

35. Transport providers will need to focus on strategic, managerial, marketing and operational actions, while transport users should endeavour to become better acquainted with both their clients and their transport providers, while at the same time improving their own organizations and becoming more involved in transport issues. Other commercial parties (banks, insurance companies, etc.) should also take actions to benefit from international commercial practices (for example, the latest version of the International Chamber of Commerce's "Uniform customs and practices for documentary credits" (ICC UCP); the new INCOterms; extension of credit facilities to cover inland transport costs of imported goods; insurance policies which are tailored to multimodal transport; the UNCTAD/ICC Rules for Multimodal Transport Documents; etc.) in trade and transport operations.

36. So as to interact with the other parties in the programme of work, the private sector should actively participate in the work of the Committee. This may be done through regular meetings with their relevant ministries and their counterparts from other countries, and by participating in meetings held under the auspices of the Committee on Shipping.

2. Public organizations

37. The public transport sector will likewise need to interact with the private sector. Export promotion, simplification of procedures and establishment of practical rules for the improvement of transport flows all require co-operation between the Government, transport providers and transport users. Governments should thus encourage the holding of consultations in these areas and should provide the interested parties with progress reports. Better use of existing infrastructure and awareness of technological developments and transport policy issues, at the national and sub-regional levels, should be the aim.

3. Co-operation between the private and public sectors

38. In order to encourage greater transparency and better co-operation in the trade and transport fields, the public and private sectors should be encouraged jointly with the Government, to establish National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committees which can formalize private/public contacts and thus facilitate improvements in the transport chain. Governments should also be encouraged to ensure that private-sector representatives are included in their delegations to meetings held under the auspices of the Committee on Shipping.

B. Substantive work by the UNCTAD secretariat

39. Substantive work by the UNCTAD secretariat should focus on three areas: (a) servicing of the Committee on Shipping; (b) monitoring of worldwide developments in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development, as well as research on these subjects for the preparation of reports to the Committee; and (c) technical assistance activities.

40. While the first item may be the most important, it is also the least time-consuming. It is the secretariat's understanding that this work has been carried out to the Committee's satisfaction, and it would thus seem unnecessary to propose any changes at this stage.

41. Similarly, the Committee has, by and large, complimented the secretariat on the quality of its regular monitoring reports and various substantive papers. Thus, presumably, work in this area should also continue to be executed as in the past. However, given the very limited staff resources, the Committee will need to set priorities regarding the areas in which it would wish to concentrate over the next few years. In this respect, the subjects listed in document TD/B/C.4/323 (paragraphs 81 to 98) and chapter I of the present note indicate, as a guide, possible work to be carried out by the secretariat in monitoring worldwide developments and preparing substantive reports in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development. These subjects can be grouped as follows.

1. Monitor worldwide developments

(a) ***On structural changes in transport supply:***

(i) Emergence of mega multimodal transport operators;

(ii) Possible entry barriers to freight forwarders and multimodal transport operators from developing countries and countries in transition wishing to enter the international transport market;

(iii) Migration of multimodal transport into physical distribution or "total transport" chains;

(iv) Developments of multimodal sea/air transport services;

(v) Emerging concentration of market power within the container-leasing industry and the effects thereof on the level of container-leasing fees;

(vi) Development of new transport infrastructure with potential global effect (alternatives to the Panama Canal, new major transhipment ports, the advent of double-stacked trains in countries other than those where they already exist, etc.);

(vii) Development of new cost-efficient transport operations with potential global effect (around-the-world services, etc.); and

(viii) Effects of increased competitiveness and liberalization policies on the transport sector of developing countries.

(b) ***On structural changes in transport demand:***

(i) Emerging transport and total distribution needs of infant industries in developing countries; and

(ii) Changes in economic systems and their impact on international trade flows and international transport needs.

(c) ***On changes in transport technology:***

(i) Developments in EDP in the context of modern transport and effects of the introduction of EDI development by highly sophisticated "mega total transport operators" relying on EDI and similarly advanced procedures;

(ii) Developments in containerization and related transport technology with potential impacts on countries' transport infrastructure and operations; and

(iii) Developments in the field of standardization of containers by monitoring and participating in the work of ISO TC104.

2. Prepare substantive reports

(a) ***On economic and commercial issues:***

(i) Impact of mega multimodal transport operators on the fragile economies of indigenous multimodal transport operators in developing countries, including the need to encourage the creation of large-sized joint-venture multimodal transport operators to

counteract the emergence of "mega carriers";

(ii) Feasibility of creating national or sub-regional container pools among multimodal transport operators in developing countries;

(iii) Quantification of level of revenue-sharing among developing and developed countries in the provision of multimodal transport services; and

(iv) Need for creating/strengthening associations to protect the national interests of transport users (shippers' councils or transport users' associations) and transport providers (professional associations of multimodal transport operators).

(b) ***On operational issues:***

(i) Development of container block train operations;

(ii) Impact on the transport industry of developing countries of the introduction of EDI and adaptation to EDIFACT of the present transport-related information technology in developing countries; and

(iii) Human-resource development management in the field of freight forwarding and multimodal transport, including aspects such as increased management awareness of the importance of manpower planning, selection, job placement and rotation, creation of external training structures, and establishment of a recognized professional grid system to promote mobility within the profession.

(c) ***On legal issues related to the development of multimodal transport and technological development:***

(i) Aspects to be considered in the harmonization and subregional co-ordination of the development of multimodal transport, including the need for an international convention on freight forwarding, the establishment of minimum standards for multimodal transport operators, and the introduction of guidelines and models for the harmonization and simplification of administrative (and Customs) procedures; and

(ii) Reference document (MT-Handbook) for officials and practitioners setting out the basic concepts of multimodal transport, and the major issues to be tackled by the private and public sectors in the process of developing multimodal transport in a country.

42. The third item, technical assistance, merits special consideration because it must be a joint action by the industry and the UNCTAD secretariat.

C. Technical assistance activities

43. Insofar as technical assistance activities are concerned, they should probably be expanded, as suggested above. However, without a reallocation of resources within the UNCTAD secretariat, the Shipping Division will not be able to undertake much more than it already manages. Thus, it will be necessary to rely not only on co-operation with the Regional Commissions, but also on regional or sub-regional institutions to supply part of such technical assistance. The greatly expanded level of requests for assistance in the fields under consideration makes this a matter of some concern.

44. Under the heading of technical assistance activities, it is possible to distinguish three main elements: (a) the creation of awareness among governmental bodies, users and transport operators; (b) a programme of assistance with implementation of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development issues; and (c) the implementation of the suggested actions, including actions to adjust the transport sector in countries moving towards market economies.

45. UNCTAD's technical assistance in the field of multimodal transport and technological developments is closely related to the secretariat's substantive work. Technical assistance plays an important role in assisting decision-makers from developing countries, as well as those from countries in transition

to a market economy. It does so in two ways:

(a) By providing and monitoring technical assistance and training in specific areas, such as those analysed by the Group of Experts, leading to the implementation of modern transport technology; and

(b) By creating awareness concerning multimodal transport issues, by preparing reference documents for decision-makers on key issues, and by keeping the decision-makers abreast of technological developments.

It also gives the secretariat valuable inputs for use in the preparation of substantive reports. The two approaches are complementary. One refers to actions in the field, whereas the other focuses on research and synthesis work to support decision-makers' considerations of these issues.

46. The first approach involves many technical assistance activities which can be undertaken by the commercial parties in co-operation with governmental agencies. There may also be scope for technical co-operation among developing countries; additionally, there may, in certain areas, particularly training, be a need for assistance from intergovernmental organizations. The areas and types of actions that might be considered are listed below, without any attempt to differentiate between actions to be taken by individual intergovernmental agencies:

(a) Assistance with implementation of specific actions, such as:

(i) Advice on the organization of awareness campaigns;
(ii) Advice to governmental and commercial parties on specific measures which will facilitate the introduction of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development in a country or sub-region;
(iii) Advice on modifications to organizational structures for companies to undertake multimodal transport operations; and
(iv) Advice on the creation of National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committees.

(b) Assistance with group-training activities.

Co-operation among interested parties will be an essential feature of this approach. This will be possible through the formation of National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committees.

47. The second approach relies on the secretariat's substantive work. In particular, as a form of technical assistance, the secretariat could play a prime role in creating the necessary awareness within the entire transport industry. In co-ordination with international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, as well as with donor countries, the secretariat could organize specific campaigns on the overall concept of multimodal transport aimed at top representatives from transport providers, users and governmental bodies, as described below.

(a) Specific awareness campaigns for **transport operators** on the importance of their role, particularly in countries located along transit routes leading to land-locked countries and remote regions. These campaigns would propose better organization of transport mode/interface operations and increased use of modern technology (containerization, computerization and EDI). They would also propose the creation or strengthening of national associations of freight forwarders and MTOs to serve as official counterparts in all negotiations with governmental bodies and transport users on trade and transport-related issues;

(b) Specific awareness campaigns for **transport users and traders** on how to benefit from the development of multimodal transport in their respective countries. These campaigns would include the need to adopt modern commercial practices (trade, bank and insurance) and to reach united positions when negociating with governmental bodies and transport operators; and

(c) Specific awareness campaigns for **governmental bodies** on actions to be taken in order to promote the development of multimodal transport in their respective countries. These campaigns would consider, where appropriate, the necessity to create (where they do not already exist) National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committees with the participation of all the public and private parties concerned, including national associations of transport users and transport operators. These committees must include technical sub-

committees on legislation and EDP/EDI to channel proposals and decisions on facilitation to the proper institutions. The campaigns would emphasize the importance of revising existing national laws and regulations concerning all transport modes and interfaces in order to harmonize the rights and duties of transport and terminal operators, particularly in relation to their liability. They would also cover such issues as Customs and banking procedures imposed on freight forwarders and MTOs, including the question of performance bonds and procedures for the payment of import duties and taxes. Finally, the campaigns would stress the importance for governmental bodies to take into consideration international transport issues in the formulation of national (transport) development plans, particularly with respect to the planning of transport-related infrastructure developments.

48. Countries wishing to receive technical assistance in the fields of multimodal transport, containerization and technological development should therefore seek donor assistance (bilateral or multilateral) and approach the UNCTAD secretariat for substantive backstopping. The Shipping Division has executed numerous technical assistance projects over the years; a number of these have been in the field of multimodal transport, containerization, and technological development. The Division maintains a roster of consultants familiar with the problems highlighted. They are ready to give factual, unbiased advice to Governments and/or private parties. The UNCTAD secretariat could serve as the "lead agency" and co-ordinate activities with other intergovernmental organizations such as the Regional Commissions, the World Bank, and regional development banks, with a view to implementing such a strategy in any country.

49. The secretariat's technical assistance experience has led to the design of a "common strategy" consisting of three phases: (a) an awareness campaign and diagnosis of the country's international transport situation; (b) the elaboration of recommendations and corresponding plans of action; and (c) the start-up of the implementation process. This modular strategy has already proved its worth. It can be modified to suit each country's particular needs. It relies extensively on interactions between consultants and national counterparts from the public and private sectors, mainly through the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee.